

NOTE TO THE PRECEDING TABLE.

To the amount of drawbacks paid in the year 1795, per this statement,	\$2,890,334 40
Must be added this sum, being drawbacks paid in Newburyport, by the present collector, on merchandise exported previous to his appointment, the particulars of which have not been received at the treasury,	8,731 39
Amount of drawbacks and debentures paid in the year 1795, per printed statement,	<u>2,898,765 79</u>

It is also to be observed, that, in some instances, the amount of duties received on particular articles, appear less than the drawbacks paid within the same period: this arises from exportations of merchandise imported in preceding years.

Stated and examined by

JOS. DAWSON, Clerk.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *Register's Office, December, 1796.*

JOSEPH NOURSE, *Register.*

4th CONGRESS.]

No. 103.

[2d SESSION.

MINT.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, DECEMBER 20, 1796.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, *December 19th, 1796.*

SIR:

By the direction of the President of the United States, I have the honor to enclose a report of the Director of the mint, suggesting the expediency of some alterations in its establishment, to render it less expensive to the public, and more accommodating to depositors. The report is accompanied with statements of the gold, silver, and copper coins issued from the mint from its commencement to the 24th of the last month; accounts of the gold and silver bullion which has been deposited; and an account of wastage and a deficit in the silver coinage, which require an appropriation of two thousand eight hundred and twenty dollars and seventy-one cents, to reimburse depositors.

I am, with great respect, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

The PRESIDENT of the Senate of the United States.

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES, *November 29, 1796.*

SIR:

I have the honor of enclosing, for the President of the United States, my annual report on the state of the mint, with the abstracts referred to therein.

With sentiments of esteem and respect, &c.

ELIAS BOUDINOT.

To the Secretary of State.

The Director of the mint of the United States respectfully reports to the President of the United States, on the state of the mint—

That, during the experience of twelve months, he has turned his attention (as far as has been in his power) to the institution under his care. He has seen, with regret, an opinion generally prevailing, that the establishment is unnecessarily expensive, and less productive than was rationally expected by its advocates and friends.

The Director, finding some foundation for the charge, has endeavored to discover the cause, as nothing appears, in the general nature of the institution, to warrant the idea.

The issue of the inquiry is, that the extraordinary expenses attending the mint are, in a great measure, owing to its original plan, and the principles on which it was established. Among others, the whole coinage, including the refinement of the precious metals, was directed by law to be executed at the public expense, the depositor being fully indemnified from all charges whatever. On this principle, not only the original cost of the works, and the salaries of the stated officers, fall on the public, but also the whole amount of the workmanship, with the alloy, wastage, and contingent losses.

The want of experimental knowledge in the business of the first establishment of the mint, prevented any tolerably precise estimate of the expenses necessarily attending the process; but, soon after the commencement of the business, it was found impracticable to proceed with propriety, unless an addition was made to the establishment, by the appointment of a melter and refiner.

This important and necessary officer is not known in foreign mints, as the precious metals are there generally deposited of the proper standard, or above it; or they are purchased by the mint, and become public property; there being professional refiners independent of the mints, whose business it is to purify metals under standard; but there being no such artists in this city, who follow the business, it became indispensably necessary to execute this service in the mint.

This circumstance was not foreseen, or, if foreseen, was considered as included in the duties of the assayer; but the necessity of so essential a check on that officer forbade this measure, had it been otherwise practicable. This added, considerably, to the annual expenses of the mint.

Formerly, the Director could not make any charge for this process against depositors; the whole expense, therefore, fell on the public. Thus, on assaying one deposite of about 196,000 oz. of silver bullion, it turned out near 24,000 oz. under standard; to refine which, it cost the United States upwards of £500; so that the depositor really gained that sum, by bringing his bullion to the mint. This operated very unequally among depositors. The citizen who brought bullion in this debased state to the mint, received as much coin for the standard silver therein, as he whose bullion was previously refined equal to the standard, and ready for coining at a very trifling expense.

Again, the institution of the mint, without any appropriation of capital, either to purchase the precious metals in bullion, anticipate payments due on depositories, or to coin for the public, has been another cause of very considerable expense. Depending upon depositors alone for the precious metals, it became necessary, for their encouragement and satisfaction, to coin every deposite, as soon as possible after it came into the treasury of the mint, to prevent its remaining unproductive to the depositor, by which means the clippings and grains were obliged to be melted and coined as they arose, often three or four times for one deposite.

Thus, the melting, refining, and coining a deposite of 200 oz. of silver, or 20 oz. of gold, would cost the public nearly as much as 1,000 oz. of either, and a much greater proportional wastage; whereas, could the bullion be purchased for the public at the market price, and kept in the vaults till a large quantity might be coined at once, or a capital of about ten thousand dollars be allowed to the mint, so as to anticipate the payments to depositors, without being obliged to an immediate coinage on every occasion, a very great public saving would take place, not only as to the wastage, but in the expenditure of the materials and labor used in the process, and no injury done to the United States, but in the loan of the money for a short time. In a word, the difference would be much the same as between the wholesale merchant and the huckster.

This measure would also have a tendency to fix the price of bullion, and indemnify the public for some part of the expense of coinage. The only question that would arise, is, whether, on the principles of political economy, it would be a prudent measure on the part of Government? Suppose the expenses of coinage, including wastage, to be fixed at three per centum to the depositor, while in foreign countries it costs nothing; the consequence would be, that bullion, in America, might vary its price three per cent. according to the balance of trade, while bullion, in those countries, must be supposed invariable in its price, let the balance of trade stand as it will. Bullion, then, in those countries, will always be at the highest price it ever can be at in America, since it is the price of coin; but in America it may be three per cent. lower. If, therefore, the United States, by coining free of all expense, contribute to keep the price of bullion higher than it is in countries where the coinage is paid for, a voluntary expense is created, of which there can be no just reason to complain.

A representation of some of these difficulties, with the dangerous situation of the mint, for want of protecting laws to secure the instruments of coinage, the metals, and the coin, as also to prevent counterfeits, has been heretofore made by the officers of the mint, with but little other success, than a resolution of Congress, enabling the Director to retain the expense of refining the precious metals under standard; but the wastage, alloy, and coinage, are still dead charges on the public treasury.

While, therefore, this policy, on the whole, is considered as beneficial to the United States, the complaints against the mint, for its heavy expenses to the public, are without solid foundation; as it is impossible to carry on an institution of this nature, under these circumstances, and which requires from fifteen to twenty workmen and laborers to attend it, without great expense. Add to this, that the alloy of silver and copper, with the loss by necessary wastage, must unavoidably rise to a considerable annual amount.

But, notwithstanding these and other difficulties attending an infant institution, especially the late great advance in the prices of materials and labor, the aggregate expenses of the mint are greatly reduced, either from the superior knowledge of the persons employed, gained by experience, or from new arrangements, found to be more advantageous than those made on the spur of the occasion. This will appear more evident, by a review of the progressive deduction of the contingent expenses in the quarterly accounts rendered in to the Treasury Department, and it is hoped that there will be a further progress in this desirable economy.

When the present Director entered upon the administration of the mint, there was no appropriation of money for the purchase of copper for the coinage of cents. This, he clearly foresaw, would prove a source of further expense, by often leaving the workmen without employ. He made application to Congress, by their committee, on this subject, but all that was obtained was thirteen thousand dollars, which was coined into cents, and returned into the public treasury, or remitted for the purchase of copper, before the rising of Congress, the last spring. No further appropriation was made, till it was too late to procure the necessary importation of copper for the summer's coinage, whereby much time has been lost, and some considerable expense of workmen has been added to the summer's account.

It is now hoped, from the present arrangement, no such inconvenience will arise hereafter, but a continual and ample supply of copper coinage be produced, adequate to the public wants.

As the laws relative to the mint now stand, the officers are obliged to pay to each depositor the coins arising from his deposite, in strict order, and to reserve three pieces of coin from each mass; yet no appropriation has been made to replace the reserves, or to make good the wastage. It is, therefore, impossible for the officers of the mint to comply with the law, and the depositors complain of being kept out of their property till provision is made by Congress for their relief.

By a number of new half johannes brought to the mint for assaying, said to have been coined in the United States, it appears that a coinage for that purpose is carried on in some State in the Union. Some of these are found to be under standard in their quality, and between two and three pennyweights less than their true weight. These are facts which the Director thinks it his duty to communicate to the President.

From the various experiments made since the establishment of the mint, it is found unnecessary to make use of silver in alloying of gold, unless it is for the purpose of beautifying the coin, in which case it should be composed at the proportion of one third silver to two thirds copper.

By the following abstracts of the bullion and coin received and issued from the mint, since its first establishment, may be seen, as well the nature of the depositories made, as the coins returned to the treasury, and the dates of the receipts and issues to this day, with the amount of the copper coinage.

From this, it appears that there is due for wastage, during that period, the quantity of fifteen hundred and ninety-nine ounces, sixteen pennyweights, and fifteen grains of silver, equal to eighteen hundred and forty-five dollars ninety-five cents and five mills. Besides a deficit of eight hundred and forty-four ounces, seventeen pennyweights, and five grains of silver, equal to nine hundred and seventy-four dollars seventy-five cents and five mills; making, in the whole, two thousand eight hundred and twenty dollars and seventy-one cents, for which an appropriation ought to be made by law, to satisfy a deficient deposite.

The Director thinks it necessary to mention, in exculpation of the former officers of the mint, that, by a report made on this subject, it appears that there is yet a considerable quantity of old pots and test bottoms, from which it is expected that nearly the amount of the deficient silver, as stated above, will be extracted.

ELIAS BOUDINOT.

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES, 29th November, 1796.

ABSTRACT A.

A statement of the denomination and value of Gold Coins issued from the Mint of the United States, from the commencement of the establishment to the date hereof.

Period when issued.	Denomination.			Value.
	Eagles.	Half Eagles.	Quarter Eagles.	
From 31st July, to 30th September, 1795, inclusive,	-	1,297	8,707	\$56,505 00
" 1st Oct. to 31st December, "	-	1,498	-	14,980 00
" 1st Jan. to 31st March, 1796, "	-	2,788	-	27,880 00
" 1st April, to 30th June, "	-	3,292	780	36,820 00
" 1st July, to 30th September, "	-	-	2,619	13,260 00
	Total,	8,875	12,106	66
				\$149,445 00

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES,

Treasurer's Office, November 24, 1796.

NICHOLAS WAY.

ABSTRACT B.

A statement of the denomination and value of Silver Coins, issued from the Mint of the United States, from the commencement of the establishment to the date hereof.

Period when issued.	Denomination.					Value.
	Dollars.	Half Dollars.	Quarter Dollars.	Dimes.	Half Dimes.	
From 1st Oct. 1794, to 30th Sept. 1795, inclusive,	126,553	323,144	-	-	25,856	\$289,417 80
" 1st Oct. 1795, to 31st Dec. "	78,238	-	-	-	60,560	81,266 00
" 1st Jan. 1796, to 31st March, 1796, "	7,717	-	-	17,950	6,840	9,854 00
" 1st April, " to 30th June, "	20,404	-	5,894	4,185	3,390	22,465 50
" 1st July, " to 30th Sept. "	31,926	-	-	-	-	31,926 00
" 1st Oct. " to this day, -	8,103	-	-	-	-	8,103 00
	Total,	272,941	323,144	5,894	22,135	96,646
						\$443,032 30

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES,

Treasurer's Office, November 24, 1796.

NICHOLAS WAY.

ABSTRACT C.

A statement of the denomination and value of Copper Coin issued from the Mint of the United States, from the commencement of the establishment to the date hereof.

Period when issued.	Denomination.		Value.
	Cents.	Half Cents.	
From March 1, 1793, to December 31, 1795, inclusive,	-	1,066,033	\$11,373 00
" Jan. 1, 1796, to March 31, 1796, "	-	501,500	5,560 00
" April 1, " to June 30, "	-	109,825	1,123 70
" July 1, " to this day, -	-	363,375	3,640 70
	Total,	2,040,733	258,014
			\$21,697 40

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES,

Treasurer's Office, November 24, 1796.

NICHOLAS WAY.

ABSTRACT D.

A statement of the gross and standard weight of Gold Bullion deposited at the Mint of the United States for coinage, from the commencement of the establishment to the date hereof.

When deposited.	Description of Bullion.	Gross weight.			Standard weight.		
		ounces.	dwt.	grs.	ounces.	dwt.	grs.
1795. Feb. 12	Ingots,	130	4	9	128	00	18
Mar. 24	Do	21	13	12	21	8	12
May 18	Chain,	27	00	00	26	13	00
" 22	Ingots,	55	2	12	53	11	2
" 25	Dust,	21	5	00	17	12	15
July 23	Do	723	9	00	600	5	00
" "	Do	877	6	00	727	18	07
" 31	Spanish Coins,	82	1	00	81	18	20
Aug. 5	Ingots,	63	17	00	63	17	00
" 6	British and Portugal Coin,	281	00	00	281	00	00
" 13	British Coins,	29	8	12	29	8	12
" 25	British and Portugal Coin,	275	8	00	274	12	18
Sept. 10	Dust,	214	17	16	214	17	16
" 17	Portuguese and British Coin,	225	00	00	225	00	00
" "	Dust,	27	8	00	27	8	00
" 18	Portuguese Coins,	450	00	00	450	00	00
Oct. 1	Ingots,	215	00	12	215	00	12
" "	Do	54	17	8	54	17	8
" 9	Do	35	6	00	35	14	00
Nov. 5	Do	27	5	12	27	4	12
" 14	Dust,	227	6	00	190	7	6
" "	Ingots,	78	17	10	78	14	3
" 16	Dust,	168	7	00	141	19	12
" "	Do	240	8	00	204	6	12
" 18	Ingots,	27	11	12	26	6	6
Dec. 1	Clippings,	24	17	00	25	1	6
" 11	Ingots,	34	10	9	33	14	15
" "	Do	80	9	12	80	00	21
" 12	Do	348	16	6	348	16	6
1796. Jan. 22	Do	54	11	12	54	14	3
" 25	Do	27	5	6	27	14	12
" 28	Do	19	1	00	20	7	00
Feb. 6	Do	56	6	12	56	6	12
" 15	Do	54	00	00	47	17	6
" 19	Do	32	11	12	32	18	18
Mar. 1	Dust,	667	17	00	619	00	11
" 5	Medal, snuff box, &c.	27	5	12	26	4	14
" 26	Ingots,	47	00	12	47	00	12
April 16	Dust,	315	10	00	278	14	00
" 25	Ingots,	27	1	6	27	1	6
May 5	Do	20	8	12	20	8	12
" 6	Do	20	9	00	19	19	00
" 7	Dust,	294	10	00	250	19	16
" "	Do	905	3	00	838	4	12
" 31	Do	583	8	00	477	6	12
June 11	Ingots,	156	11	00	142	6	10
" 25	Do	70	14	00	71	5	22
July 5	Do	34	11	12	34	11	12
" 11	Do	20	9	00	18	3	6
" "	Do	343	9	00	373	10	22
" 12	Do	84	3	00	84	3	00
" 14	Do	50	17	00	39	5	20
" 21	Do	32	13	00	32	13	00
Sept. 8	Do	86	1	8	86	00	18
Oct. 11	Dust,	973	8	00	830	15	10
" 19	Ingots,	151	4	8	128	11	00
" 28	Do	34	11	18	34	11	18
Nov. 10	Do	20	00	00	16	15	5
" "	Do	49	19	6	48	17	3
" 12	Do	291	12	00	314	15	21
" 24	Do	49	4	20	50	2	00
		10,670	10	10	9,837	00	14

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES,

Treasurer's Office, November 24, 1796.

NICHOLAS WAY, Treasurer.

ABSTRACT E.

A statement of the gross and standard weight of silver bullion, deposited at the mint of the United States for coinage, from the commencement of the establishment to the date hereof.

When deposited.	Description of bullion.	Gross weight.	Standard weight.
		oz. dwts. grs.	oz. dwts. grs.
1794. July 18.	Coins of France,	94,179 00 00	69,692 8 00
Aug. 22.	Ingots,	1,479 5 00	1,479 5 00
" Do.	"	255 5 00	255 5 00
" Do.	"	1,132 10 00	1,132 10 00
" Do.	"	40 13 00	40 13 00
23.	Coins of Spain,	19,271 15 00	19,271 15 00
1795. Jan'y. 1.	Ingots,	93,298 5 00	95,791 5 00
May 9.	Do.	15,744 00 00	16,106 19 00
18.	Do.	4,177 00 00	4,287 10 00
30.	Do.	7,039 5 00	7,206 0 00
June 10.	Do.	11,170 10 00	11,399 13 00
12.	Coins of France,	527 10 00	395 0 00
13.	Ingots,	14,546 10 00	14,782 7 00
July 9.	Do.	1,981 00 00	1,966 14 00
" Do.	"	12,085 5 00	12,400 6 00
" Do.	"	11,719 5 00	12,060 6 00
" Do.	"	12,027 15 00	12,407 12 00
" Do.	"	11,644 15 00	12,002 18 00
Sept. 21.	Do.	16,961 5 00	17,360 17 00
" Do.	"	16,795 00 00	17,114 12 00
" Do.	"	16,999 10 00	17,426 18 00
Oct. 10.	Coins of France,	299 5 00	217 18 00
24.	Do.	1,029 00 00	748 8 00
Nov. 21.	Ingots,	710 3 00	719 0 00
1795. Dec. 21.	Ingots,	1,016 00 00	1,037 4 00
1796. Feb. 3.	Do.	216 4 00	223 7 00
Mar. 14.	Do.	357 10 00	352 2 00
28.	Do.	1,275 15 00	1,286 7 00
April 25.	Do.	4,495 18 00	4,980 13 00
May 23.	Do.	8,454 5 00	9,243 18 00
30.	Do.	341 10 00	331 11 00
June 23.	Do.	8,048 10 00	8,758 17 00
July 20.	Do.	185 00 00	204 10 00
Aug. 11.	Do.	8,225 5 00	8,995 5 00
23.	Do.	2,326 10 00	2,378 9 00
29.	Do.	6,748 10 00	7,409 18 00
Sept. 15.	Do.	218 15 00	229 13 00
24.	Do.	6,010 00 00	6,596 5 00
Nov. 12.	Do.	3,859 10 00	4,208 18 00
	Total,	416,892 18 00	402,502 16 00

NICHOLAS WAY.

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES, Treasurer's Office, Nov. 24, 1796.

ABSTRACT F.

DR.

Chief Coiner, his account of Silver, in account current with the Treasurer of the Mint.

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478

		Standard weight.	Value.			Standard weight.	Value.	
		Ounces. dwts. grs.	Dolls. Cts. Ms.			Ounces. dwts. grs.	Dolls. Cts. Ms.	
1795.	September 30	To silver bullion, delivered him for coinage, from the commencement of the mint establishment to this day,	320,170 3 0	369,427 5 5	1795.	September 30	By silver coins, received from him from commencement of the mint establishment to this day,	250,828 15 4
	December 31	To silver bullion, delivered him in the quarter ending this day,	12,407 12 0	14,316 46 0		December 31	Silver coin, received from him in the quarter ending this day,	70,430 10 16
1796.	March 31	Do.	4,584 6 0	5,289 56 0	1796.	March 31	Do.	8,540 2 16
	June 30	Do.	14,556 2 0	16,795 49 0		June 30	Do.	19,470 2 0
	September 30	Do.	34,572 17 0	39,891 73 5		September 30	Do.	27,669 4 0
	October 3	Do.	365 5 0	421 44 0		October 17	Do.	7,022 12 0
						November 19	Allowance for wastage, at the rate of 2 grains per ounce, (in pursuance of a warrant of the Director, dated this day) for melting, refining, and coining 383,961 oz. 6 dwts. 12 grs., being the weight returned by him in coin, as above,	1,599 16 15
							Silver coins, received from him from 16th May, 1795, to this day, retained by me for the inspection of commissioners, appointed by law to make assays of reserved pieces at the mint,	1,845 95 5
							95 6 16	110 0 0
							154 18 0	178 73 0
							844 17 5	974 75 5
							386,656 5 0	446,141 74 0

November 24. To balance due Treasurer of the Mint, - - - 844 17 5 974 75 5

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES, TREASURER'S OFFICE, NOVEMBER 24, 1796.

NICHOLAS WAY.

FINANCE

1796.